



City of Gaithersburg Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Gaithersburg Celebrates Green Month with Virtual Programs, No Straw Pledge, Green Up Day & Screening of “Wasted: The Story of Food Waste”

Gaithersburg, MD (March 15, 2021) The City of Gaithersburg invites you to participate in activities that celebrate and improve the environment during Gaithersburg Green Month in April. In addition to being fun and educational, it is also a great way for students to earn service learning credits while making our community a better place to live. This year’s Green Month includes a variety of virtual and socially distanced in-person activities to help protect and preserve our environment. Some of the offerings include a “No Straw Pledge,” park clean-ups, a screening of the film “Wasted! The Story of Food Waste,” a self-guided tree tour of Morris Park, and discussions about the Potomac watershed, pesticide free lawn care, and much more.

Take the No Straw Pledge

500 million straws are thrown away in the US every day. Straws may seem not that important, but they don’t biodegrade, they just get broken into smaller pieces. By 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean (by weight). Plastic straws are just one of many single-use plastics polluting the water and harming sea life. There’s something you can do about it. Take action against plastic pollution starting with plastic straws. Sign the No Straw Pledge [here](#), and join the #StopSucking for a Strawless Ocean [social media challenge](#).

Community Shredding & E-Waste Recycling Event

April 3, 9 a.m. – Noon, [Activity Center at Bohrer Park](#)

Just in time for spring cleaning. Bring your paper documents and select electronics to our free Community Shredding & Electronics Recycling event. To maintain physical distancing, staff will remove shredded material directly from your trunk. Click [here](#) for a list of what we’ll accept, including light bulbs this time. While the service is free, we will gratefully accept the donation of nonperishable food items and diapers for the [Gaithersburg HELP](#) food pantry.

Salt Watch Blitz – Enter to Win a Prize!

April 3, All Day

Want to know how road salt pollution is affecting Gaithersburg? Even when winter is over, road salt pollution can be found in streams and rivers throughout the spring and summer. It’s harmful to both wildlife and our drinking water. You’re invited to become a stream monitor to help keep track of salt in our local waterways. Order your free Salt Watch test kit now from www.saltwatch.org to get started. Submit results of tests you’ve

taken in Gaithersburg by April 3 to be automatically entered into a raffle for a set of Save Our Streams prizes, including a limited edition t-shirt. Make sure to order your kits ASAP to ensure they arrive via USPS before April 3. (Of course, you are welcome to do more Salt Watch monitoring before or after the Blitz).

Morris Park Tree Walk

April 5 – 30, [Morris Park](#)

Take a self-guided tour and see if you can find all of the marked trees in Morris Park. Follow along with a story map (QR codes will be posted on each tree) on your phone that will feature more information about each tree, fun facts about the tree species, its growth habits, and more. Printed brochures will also be available.

Green Month/Arbor Day Proclamation

April 5, 7:30 p.m., Virtual Mayor & City Council Meeting

With an official proclamation, the Mayor and City Council will designate April as “Gaithersburg Green Month” and April 30 as “Arbor Day” in the City of Gaithersburg. Environmental Award winners will be recognized virtually throughout the month on social media @GburgMD.

Pesticide Free Spring Lawn Care by Mary Travaglini

April 8, 6 p.m., Virtual via Zoom

Learn how to maintain an organic lawn without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, understand soil health, and discuss organic soil amendments with Mary Travaglini of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. Register [here](#).

Capital Area Solar Co-Op

April - August, Virtual

For the first time in jurisdictional history, the City of Gaithersburg will be joining the cities of Rockville, Takoma Park, Bowie, Arlington, and Washington, DC, as well as Montgomery County, in an effort to promote residential solar installations. This is no April’s Fool’s joke - this collaborative co-op opportunity will be available from April through August 2021 for residents throughout the Capital area. Have you been thinking about going solar, but don’t know where to start? Not sure about financing or incentives? This is the opportunity to learn everything there is to know about going solar. Visit [here](#) for more information. #ItsADMVthing #CapitalAreaGoesSolar

Green Cocktails: Greening Your Garden

April 9, 7 p.m., [Community Museum Facebook Page](#)

Lauren Hubbard, owner of Native by Design, talks about simple changes we can make so our yards and gardens will be more sustainable. Enjoy a homemade cocktail recipe by Dragon Distillery, LLC & Butterfly Spirits. RSVP to the Facebook Event [here](#).

Explore Gaithersburg! Morris Park Clean-up and Trail Mapping

April 10, Noon to 2 p.m., Morris and Rosemont Valley Stream Parks

The Gaithersburg Parks, Arts, and Recreation Corporation (G-PARC) continues its efforts to map the trails in the City, and has planned three, COVID-friendly outdoor activities during Green Month:

- **Clean-up of Morris Park:** volunteers will pick up trash along the Muddy Branch Stream in Morris Park. Trash bags, pick-up sticks and gloves will be provided.
- **Trail Mapping:** volunteers will map the connecting trails between Bohrer Park and Morris Park. Volunteers will need a cell phone and walking shoes.
- **Exploration of Rosemont Valley Stream Park:** volunteers will explore the amenities that Rosemont Valley Stream Park offers and look for and record existing trails. Volunteers will need sturdy shoes (that can get wet), and a cell phone.

Those under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at Morris Park in the main parking lot. SSL hours available. Water/light snacks will be provided. Masks are required. Register by sending your name and number of people attending to gparc@gaithersburgmd.gov.

Protecting the Potomac: Our Hometown River

April 12, 7:30 p.m., [Virtual Lecture](#)

The Potomac Riverkeeper Network (PRKN) is a nonprofit organization that has been stopping pollution and restoring clean water in the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers and their tributaries for the past 20 years. Its work encompasses 14,700 square miles of the Potomac River Watershed, and its activities involve community engagement, advocacy, and enforcement. The PRKN believes access to clean, safe water is a right, and by holding polluters accountable and spearheading public awareness campaigns, it has been able to make great strides towards a cleaner, pollution-free Potomac. Nancy Stone, President of PRKN, is recognized as one of the nation's most experienced water policy experts, with a long and distinguished history of protecting our nation's water. View the virtual program live on April 12 [here](#).

Gaithersburg HOA Sustainability Summit

April 13, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Virtual via Zoom

Are you a City of Gaithersburg HOA or civic association resident or board member? Do you care about your community's health and want to keep your neighborhood clean and "green?" Join Sustainable Maryland and learn how your community can take the lead in sustainability efforts and hear from community Green Teams that are doing this work already. This new effort seeks to empower and organize Green Teams at the local and neighborhood scale, and better connect efforts to municipal and county government. The initiative is funded by the City of Gaithersburg through grants from the [Chesapeake Bay Trust](#). View the agenda and register [here](#).

"Recycling Beyond the Basics" Lunch Learn

April 14, Noon, Virtual via Zoom

Why can I recycle my water bottle but not my solo cup? Why do they keep making recycling hard? Are these questions driving you crazy? Spend your lunch hour getting to the bottom of it with City Sustainability Coordinator Deb Moran. Attendees will be registered to win a confidentially stamp, which you will learn is super useful. Register [here](#).

Environmental Film Night – "Wasted! The Story of Food Waste"

April 17, Virtual Screening – Link to view film will be sent via e-mail to registrants on April 16

[Register here](#)

Calling all chefs, foodies and, well, everyone who eats anything. The Environmental Affairs Committee presents "Wasted! The True Story of Food Waste," a documentary that unveils the realities of food waste and the inspiring people doing everything in their power to prevent it. The film aims to change the way people buy, cook, recycle, and eat food. [Register here](#) to receive a link to watch the film (as many times as you like that day). Registrants will receive an e-mail immediately after submitting the form to confirm the screening. The link to view the film will be sent on April 16. Join the "Make the Most of Food Waste" Challenge [here](#).

Recycle Leaders "Make the Most of Food Waste" Challenge

April 1- 30

We're taking the "Make the Most of Food Waste" challenge. Add your household to team City of Gaithersburg and join us for a four-week journey to understand our food waste habits and learn how to reduce. The first two weeks of the challenge are about gathering data about what you throw in the trash to be incinerated or in the compost bin. The April 17 screening of the film ["Wasted! The Story of Food Waste"](#) will inspire us for Phase 2 of the challenge - finding ways to reduce. Join our team as we think outside of the box, get to know new neighbors virtually and have fun. To join Team City of Gaithersburg, visit <https://www.recycleleaders.com/current-challenge>, click sign up, select "Join an existing team" on page one, and "City of Gaithersburg" on page two.

Sustainable Maryland Survey

April 1 - 30

The City of Gaithersburg's Environmental Affairs Committee is conducting a survey to understand what environmental issues are of most concern to residents and other stakeholders in Gaithersburg. The results will guide initiatives and recommendations moving forward. No personal information will be recorded and individual survey responses will be kept confidential. The survey will be available April 1 – 30.

Earth Day - Storm Drain Art Contest Winner Announced

April 22

Want to help educate your fellow neighbors on water quality issues through captivating works of art? The Gaithersburg Parks, Arts & Recreation Corporation (G-PARC) Art Alliance and the City's Stormwater Management Program invite artists of all ages to submit designs for a Storm Drain Art project to call attention to the importance of protecting our Chesapeake Bay watershed. Hurry. The deadline is Monday, March 29. Selections will be announced on Earth Day, April 22. All details can be found [here](#).

Montgomery County GreenFest

April 24, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Virtual Events

GreenFest will be held virtually with a series of free online events. It's a chance for residents, businesses, nonprofits and neighbors to come together, share ideas and get involved. GreenFest will showcase a series of free lectures by industry experts, an online nonprofit resource exchange, and initiatives to reduce your carbon footprint. The event will also feature interactive children's games and educational activities that can be enjoyed safely at home. Learn more by visiting <https://montgomerycountygreenfest.org/>.

Stream Walk Event

April 24, 10 a.m.

Join staff from the Stormwater Program in a walk along a tributary of Long Draught Branch, the site of the Solitaire Court Stream Restoration Project. As part of the City's response to the state-mandated watershed restoration program, the project will restore 2,200 linear feet of stream to reduce erosion and protect underground pipelines in Diamond Farm Park. More information on the project is available [here](#). Masks and pre-registration are required. Limited participation groups will be scheduled in the morning starting at 10 am. To register, e-mail your name and contact information to Stormwater@gaitHERsburgmd.gov by Thursday, April 22.

Walking with Shakespeare

April 24, 1 – 4 p.m.

William Shakespeare's most celebrated plays come to life in this unique walking tour of Observatory Park. Join us in the merry month of April (the bard was born on April 23, 1564) to stroll past six iconic love scenes, encountering wandering minstrels along the way. The scenes last approximately 10 minutes, and all pathways are accessible. Entries are timed, and up to six (6) individuals may register as a group. Masks are required. Suggested donations of \$5 per person will support the Arts Barn, Gaithersburg's home for the performing and visual arts. Registration link to come. Click [here](#) for more information.

StoryTime Station at the Community Museum: Frogness by Sarah Nelson

April 27, 11 a.m., [Community Museum Facebook Page](#)

An exuberant frog hunt full of mud, muck, and wonder leads to a playful experience of "frogness." As rain clouds bloom across the sea and the first stars wink, Sammy and Chocolate tiptoe into the muddy marsh behind their house in search of frogs. They can hear frogs everywhere—croaking, chirping, clucking, burping—but where are they hiding?! Appropriate for ages 5 to 9. Books are available to purchase from [Novel Books in Clarksburg](#) or from a book seller near you. RSVP to the Facebook Event [here](#).

Arbor Day Celebration**April 29, Noon, Virtual via Zoom**

Join us for a kid-friendly Arbor Day presentation featuring an educational lesson with environmental themes. Register [here](#).

Community Green Up Day All Month Long

Spring cleaning takes on a new meaning during this year's Community Green Up Day. Join hundreds of volunteers as they make a difference throughout the community all month long by cleaning up and beautifying local streams, schools, parks, and homeowner association common areas. Site leaders can sign up to host a cleanup event by filling out a [registration form online](#). Supplies (trash bags, pick-up sticks, gloves) can be picked up beforehand, then dropped back off after the event at Gaithersburg Public Works, 800 Rabbitt Road. The City's Bulk Pick Up Team will collect trash on the following Mondays for cleanups taking place over the weekends. Students can earn student service learning credits by participating. If you or your organization would like more information about volunteering, please e-mail environment@gaithersburgmd.gov.

"Birds of a Feather" Art Exhibit**March 26 – May 2, Arts Barn Gallery by appointment**

"Birds of a Feather" features artwork inspired by our feathered friends. Birds enthuse us in many ways by their infinite variety and beauty, their habitats and the creative inspiration they have given to the visual arts, mythology, literature, and poetry. This exhibit features two-dimensional artwork that encourages our imaginations to take flight as it explores many types of birds. Viewing hours are by appointment Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and select Saturdays. Please call 301-258-6394 or e-mail artgalleries@gaithersburgmd.gov.

For more information about participating in Green Month, call 301-258-6370 or e-mail environment@gaithersburgmd.gov.

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